

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION: Please replace the last paragraph on page 10 with the following amended paragraph:

A lead reservoir cover plate 62 covers a top of a lead reservoir 64 formed in a top of the heater body 42. A lead strip opening 66 is formed through the lead reservoir cover plate 62, adjacent the lead reservoir 64. A lead passage 65 is formed adjacent the lead reservoir 64. At least one lead cross passage 67 is formed adjacent the lead passage 65. At least two lead feed openings 69 are supplied with molten lead 210 from the lead passage 65 or at least one lead cross passage 67. An insert gas reservoir passage 68 is formed over the lead reservoir 64. The inert gas reservoir passage 68 receives inert gas through an inlet pipe 70. An inert gas tank 72 supplies the insert gas 208. The inert gas 208 prevents drossing of the molten lead 210 in the lead reservoir 64. An inert gas passage 71 is formed in a bottom of the container heater platen 44. At least two inert gas passage openings 74 are formed through the container insulator 52 and the heater body 42. A shuttle actuator 76 48 is used to slide the lead dispensing shuttle plate 48 from a fill position to a dispensing position. An end of the shuttle plate 76 is attached to a moving end of the shuttle actuator 76.

Please replace the last paragraph on page 12 with the following amended paragraph:

The battery assembling method preferably operates in the following manner. With reference to figure 1, if the lug preparation area 10 is required, the horizontal container positioner 20 indexes the battery container 200 over the lug heating station 24 and the lugs 210 209 of the battery plates 202 are heated before fluxing by the at least one heating element 30. With reference to figure 5, the horizontal container positioner 20 then indexes the battery

container 200 over the fluxing pan 36. With reference to figure 6, the lug actuator 32 raises the fluxing pan 36 to coat the lugs ~~210~~ 209 with flux 204. With reference to figures 7 and 8, the lug actuator 32 lowers the fluxing pan 36 so that the horizontal container positioner 20 may index the battery container 200 over the tinning pan 38. With reference to figure 9, the lug actuator 32 raises the tinning pan 38 to tin the lugs ~~210~~ 209 with solder 206. With reference to figures 11 and 12, the lug actuator 32 lowers the tinning pan 38 and the horizontal container positioner 20 indexes the battery container 200 over the lead dispenser/heater unit 12.

Please replace the Abstract with the following amended Abstract:

A battery assembling method includes a lead dispenser/heater unit, cover positioner, container positioner, and lead feeder. A battery container with battery plates contained therein is retained by the ~~a~~ container positioner. A battery cover is retained by the ~~a~~ cover positioner. Molten lead is retained within the ~~a~~ lead dispenser/heater unit. The exposed areas of the lead dispenser/heater unit are preferably flooded with an inert gas to prevent drossing of the molten lead. A container heating platen is disposed on a top of the lead dispenser/heater unit and a cover heating platen on a bottom thereof. The container positioner brings the battery container in contact with the container heating platen and the cover positioner brings the battery cover in contact with the cover heating platen. Molten lead is dispensed into the battery cover; the lead dispenser/heater unit is withdrawn; and the battery container is sealed against the battery cover while the lugs of the battery plates are inserted into molten lead in the battery cover. The lead dispenser/heater unit is filled with lead from a lead feeder.